

To whom it may concern,

I am writing in regard to the "Tabor to Platte Rail to Trail" proposal. It is my hope to share some insight on the matter. Having grown up very close to this proposed and then becoming a 10-year resident of Rapid City, this matter is important to me. As an avid hiker and trail runner, I can attest to an entire community that actively travels throughout the Midwest to experience its trail systems. If not for the substantial health and mental benefits that come from experiencing the outdoors, one should weigh the financial gain that comes from those who travel to experience it these trails. Additionally, campgrounds near the Missouri River have experienced an unprecedented growth during the past 2 years. This has undoubtedly been observed in the local communities. By not providing these campers or the numerous hiking/running/biking enthusiasts across the country with a proper trail experience, we are simply allowing their dollars to go to the communities that do offer these experiences.

As a former resident of Rapid City and someone who has personally observed the numerous benefits that come with a good trail system, I urge you to progress this proposal. Thank you for your considerations.

Best regards,

Dr. Jevin Meyerink

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Rail to Trail thoughts from afar

The proposed Tabor to Platte Rail to Trail meetings and progress have been well covered by The Platte Enterprise. I read the paper from Florida as my adopted mom grew up in Platte (Janice Brummel). (Please note: You can skip this first paragraph.)

Please encourage your friends and neighbors to be open minded about this decades old yet radical rail to trail concept for Platte to Tabor. I live in formerly rural Florida west of Orlando. We are near a Rail Trail called the Van Fleet Trail. The local residents had the foresight to begin with a clay trail in 1992, then paving the 8 foot wide trail from 1995 to 1997. Today this would be impossible as growth, progress, and budget challenges would prevent the completion of the trail.

Please consider your current and future residents as you evaluate this opportunity. The Van Fleet trail is straight and flat for a casual rider like me to ride while enjoying the wildlife and views. The Van Fleet trail is 30 miles long which allows my triathlete wife to ride for 2-4 hours uninterrupted. The Van Fleet trail provides a safe and largely shady path through what has become a wildlife viewing destination within swamps and cattle ranches. Whether you want to see endangered animals, bird watch, or see swamp life, it is all there along the margins and above the trail.

While I don't understand riding a bike at 20 MPH for 40 miles and you may not understand casually pedaling along counting endangered gopher tortoises or looking for alligators some of your friends, neighbors, or future generations might.

May I suggest that you not miss the opportunity to add this long term, low cost, and beneficial amenity to your community?

Marty Proctor  
Groveland, FL